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ABSTRACT

This study interviewed 22 stakeholders in a Professional Development School (PDS) to determine their attitudes about the purpose, processes, relationships, and outcomes of their partnership. The study involved a series of in-depth, semi-structured, 1-hour interviews with PDS stakeholders to identify critical elements deemed necessary for the initiation, sustainment, and evaluation of an emerging PDS. Researchers transcribed each interview, then analyzed participant observation records and field notes for theme development and categorization. Stakeholders described three main purposes of PDSs, though with varying degrees of acceptance and understanding. The results revealed at least three different cultural groups in existence at the PDS. They were the school-based pragmatists, the university-based conceptualizers, and the partners (school and university stakeholders who were flexible thinkers and believed in the notion of the PDS and its capabilities). The study proposes an assessment framework that examines the effectiveness of a PDS on five levels: improved K-16 student learning; preservice education worthy of preparing the next generation of teachers; meaningful, needs-based inservice professional development; mutual renewal that generates knowledge for the profession; and the cultivated mutuality of the collaborative relationship. (Contains 24 references.) (SM)

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MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ASSESSMENT PROCESS FOR AN EMERGING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOOL

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Abstract

As Professional Development Schools begin their second decade of existence, little is yet known about their effectiveness. Twenty-two identified stakeholders of the Mountainview High School PDS in New England shared their perspectives on the purpose, processes, relationships, and outcomes of their partnership. Their views were examined in order to identify the critical elements deemed necessary for the initiation, sustainment, and evaluation of an emerging PDS. PDSs are very dynamic and constantly changing entities and, as a result, are rapidly moving targets with unique characteristics, rendering the use of conventional assessment models impractical and futile. This study proposes an assessment framework that examines the effectiveness of a PDS on five important levels: improved student learning K-16; pre-service education worthy of preparing the next generation of teachers; meaningful, needs-based in-service professional development; mutual renewal that generates knowledge for the profession; and, the cultivated mutuality of the collaborative relationship.

Introduction: Two Cultures (School and University) on a Collision Course?

As rising expectations for schools have led directly to rising expectations of teachers, concern about the state of education in North America seems to have focused more particularly on the state of teacher education in recent years. Several reports issued in the past decade have specifically targeted teacher education in this country as a cause of the detrimental state of schools and as the source of hope for improvement. In 1986, the Holmes Group (renamed the Holmes Partnership in 1996) published Tomorrow's Teachers – a report which called for the overhaul of schools of education. The report's authors – the Deans of over 200 colleges of education – pledged to emphasize greater field-based practica and assign more college faculty to what would be known as Professional Development Schools (PDSs). Not only would PDS partnerships be charged with training the nations next generation of teachers, they would also serve as centers where continuous professional development for all

educators occurred. In the PDS model, veteran teachers and prospective teachers alike would pursue collaborative inquiry with their colleagues from institutions of higher education. Finally, PDS centers would become places where the simultaneous renewal of the school and the university would occur, generating knowledge and informing school reform.

Building on an existing body of exemplary practices, the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (1996) has called schools and universities, along with legislators, parents, community groups, businesses and students, to demand teacher preparation programs that foster excellence and aim toward higher standards, that promote learning for all, and that further mutual renewal activities. It has insisted on the creation of PDS partnerships as a vehicle for accomplishing its ambitious goal of raising the quality of teaching in this country. There are, however inherent difficulties, due to the nature of schools and universities, that render the creation of such partnerships difficult at best, and impossible, at worst.

Cultural Differences in School-University Partnerships

Collaborative association between universities and schools is more easily defined than accomplished. Bringing together these two institutions presents many challenges. One of these challenges is bridging the difference between the cultures which make up these institutions. Because the very nature of a PDS calls for collaboration between two institutions with different structures and missions, reconciling differences in order to work productively is essential to its success.

Three decades ago when the nation's leading educators were discussing school and university collaboration in laboratory schools, Ladd (1969) described a fascinating etiology of tensions in light of these newly proposed promising alliances. These tensions would begin to manifest themselves in more significant ways as emerging partnerships moved beyond what Cuban (1988) described as simple and comfortable first-order changes, to the more complex and laborious second-order changes intended. Because more significant partnerships require

participating organizations to become involved in one another's major policies and practices in unaccustomed ways, professional and organizational friction are likely to result from attempts at adjusting to new norms and structures.

The Need for Evaluation of PDSs

PDSs have existed in this country for over ten years. Their proliferation on the national scene is remarkable as schools and universities invest important resources in establishing PDS relationships that they had previously invested in campus-based programs. Recent growth, however, has occurred with very little knowledge of how effectively the PDS model can support school, university and partnership goals. Little is known about the effectiveness of the PDS model due to a lack of assessment and evaluation projects concerning school-university collaborative endeavors. In order to satisfy policy-makers, resource providers and the schools and universities involved, assessment projects have recently become a greater priority in the education arena.

The problem of evaluation in education is increasingly moving to the forefront of the reform agenda. Resource providers and policy makers have demanded more information on the impact of the programs they have sponsored through financial and legislative channels (McLaughlin, 1996). The argument advanced by policy groups is that to satisfy a public increasingly worried about the state and quality of education in the country, government and philanthropic agencies must be able to provide concrete evidence that the programs they sponsor are positively effecting educational improvements. Assessing the impact of programs is challenging for a number of reasons. First, collecting data on the direct and indirect impacts of programs on students and clients requires an increase in human and financial resources which may detract from the original purpose of the initiative. Second, evaluation methodology which accurately describes the impact of programs is complex and ambiguous.

The intent of this study was to identify the critical elements deemed necessary for the initiation, sustainment, and evaluation of an emerging PDS by extrapolating the perspectives

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of stakeholders on the purpose, processes, relationships, and outcomes of a school-university partnership. Because the PDS is essentially a rapidly moving target, developmentally speaking, the emphasis placed on the inherent and evolving cultures and their influence on the partnership itself is central. While the need for an assessment process for PDSs is great because of its youth and its financial and human resource costs, its feasibility is difficult because of its continuously evolving state. An assessment process which considers the perspectives of the participants involved and which accounts for the evolution of the entity is suggested. We are moving to PDSs quickly, without understanding how the cultures can be organized to serve a single purpose — the improvement of learning — or how we can assess progress in PDS development when specific capabilities are still emerging in the literature.

Goals of the PDS

Much of the literature available to date on the subject of PDSs focuses on the goals of such collaboration and the characteristics or attributes of either existing or emerging partnerships. There appear to be three major goals of PDSs: first, PDSs are designed as centers where future teachers are trained (Goodlad, 1990; Holmes Group, 1986; Lieberman & Miller, 1990); second, PDSs offer veteran teachers ongoing professional development (Darling-Hammond, 1994); finally, PDSs provide an opportunity for mutual renewal of both the school and the university (Darling-Hammond, 1994; Goodlad 1984; Lieberman & Miller, 1990). Other objectives of PDSs appear to fall into one or more of the aforementioned triad of goals. For example, improved student learning is an objective that is aspired to in a renewed school. Also, research on learning, instruction, organizational change, and the like are examples of the goals of a renewed college of education.

Indicators of Success for PDSs

Some authors have described characteristics that, when present, increase the likelihood that a focused collaborative effort between a school and a university will result in an effective PDS, thereby improving the quality of teaching and teacher education, increasing the

effectiveness of educational research, and producing higher levels of learning among all students (Murray, 1993). However, because PDSs are a relatively new phenomenon, there has been little written regarding the performance or effectiveness of such partnerships with respect to their original goals. There are few real evaluations of PDSs in the literature and what is available is thin on substance (Teitel, 1996).

In response to the obvious need for greater contributions to the evaluation literature in the PDS movement, the following qualitative study was initiated. It consisted in a journey through one PDS in an attempt to determine how those most informed and invested in the partnership would characterize the elements most critical to the success and effectiveness of their partnership.

The University of Vermont School/College Collaboration

Since 1988, the University of Vermont has sponsored and supported school/university collaboration with local school districts to address the challenges of teacher-preparation, professional development, school-based research and school improvement. The initial focus of these partnerships emphasized teacher-preparation and professional development. Recently, those efforts have been joined by an increase in school-based research and the important role it plays in informing practice. The following describes the activities associated with the partnership.

The School Development Institute

During the early 1980s, the University of Vermont began to sponsor school-based staff development summer conferences. Called School Development Institutes (SDIs), the collaborative design process petitions the input of participating teachers in identifying professional development needs by early spring. During summer week-long institutes, teams of educators from area schools attend a series of workshops and use their newly gained knowledge to develop action plans for implementation in the following academic year. At the

conclusion of the academic year, participants would receive graduate credit for their efforts upon receipt of final team and individual reports.

The granting of graduate credit is an important feature of this type of professional development. Although the budgets of most school districts in the state for such activity are minimal at best, most collective bargaining agreements with local teacher associations permit the reimbursement of up to 6 credit hours of graduate coursework per year. A significant amount of professional development, therefore occurs throughout the state via this vehicle.

Problem-Based School Development

The SDIs have evolved during the past ten years and many now include a problem-based component. In this iteration, teachers participating in Problem-Based School Development Institutes are reimbursed a portion of their tuition in redevlopment funds to support their implementation plans. For example, a school district may negotiate a tuition fee of $500 per participant with the university. If the enrollment is high enough to cover the cost of instruction and university overhead, each participant would receive up to $250 in development funds to support their work. Therefore a team of 4 middle school teachers participating for credit would receive $1,000 in development funds to purchase curriculum materials, hire a consultant or facilitator, or travel to a conference.

Once a team of educators from a particular school decides to enroll in the institute, they must attend the kick-off days in early summer and produce a preliminary plan and budget which is submitted to the institute coordinator for approval. They will continue to work individually and collaboratively throughout the remainder of the summer and begin to implement their strategic plan during the school year. In November and in May, teams report progress and findings to their educational community and institute coordinator. Provided they have followed the problem-based development process and have adhered to the course requirements, they receive graduate credit upon completion of their project.

Problem-Based School Development (PBSD) relies on a set of questions team members can ask as they struggle to understand a problem in depth and then to search widely for the solution that fits and costs least (Clarke, et al., 1998): what is happening; what do we need to know; what have we learned; and, what solutions fit the model? The search for new information – from library, experts, communication networks, and local field-tests – makes problem-based school development an authentic learning experience, managed by independent teams of teachers.

The University of Vermont Professional Development Schools

The University of Vermont officially entered the PDS era in the 1988-89 school year. Mountainview High School welcomed the increased, more purposeful presence of the university. In the past 8 years, the efforts at Mountainview and at the remaining five PDS sites that have since joined the network, have evolved to their current level of operation. At the moment the following activities may be observed in a University of Vermont PDS (figure 1):

- pre-service teacher education for undergraduate and graduate (Post-Baccalaureate and Mater's) students;
- in-service professional development;
- School Development Institutes;
- graduate courses leading to Master's degrees in Leadership and Curriculum and Instruction; and,
- school and university faculty research.

Although not every feature exists in each PDS, the sum of these activities produces considerable joint inquiry about teaching and learning.

By far the most active component of the University of Vermont PDS network is the pre-service teacher education program. At the graduate level, aspiring teachers who have earned a Bachelor's degree in either Social Studies, Science, Mathematics, Foreign Language, or English, spend an entire year 'in-residence' at one of the university's PDSs. Their entire slate

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of coursework is offered at their site and is delivered by both school and university faculty. Most courses are held after school, in the late afternoon and early evening.

During the first half of the year (August - December), interns – as they are generally referred to – spend the majority of their time observing classes, tutoring at-risk students, assuming nominal teaching responsibilities, and enrolling in a total of 18 credit hours of coursework. During the second half of the year (January - June), interns assume a regular faculty teaching load and enroll in six additional credit hours of coursework.

To support the influx of teaching interns and the development of the school/university relationship, a site coordinator is assigned to each PDS by the university. Typically a faculty member or graduate teaching fellow, the site coordinator works closely with school faculty and administration to ensure that the addition of teaching resources is benefiting both partners as much as possible. At most sites, a school faculty member is also identified as an on-site coordinator to assist the university representative, as the latter cannot be in attendance at all times. The on-site coordinator is remunerated by the university for their work.

Among the activities in which the teaching interns participate are a variety of school improvement initiatives, including those inaugurated during the summer Institute. Interns have proven to be valuable resources by gathering resources, supporting the implementation of plans, and assisting with the inquiry phase of the action research cycle. Their energy and fresh perspective help maintain the momentum built during the summer weeks following the institute. In some cases, teaching interns actually attend the institute kick-off days and become involved from the earliest stages. Because of this level of involvement, the interns gain first-hand experience and knowledge of school improvement and professional development initiatives, and the faculty engaged in this work receive additional resources the interns contribute. The result are new ideas that, when brought to the classroom, translate into increased, more meaningful, learning opportunities for students.

Research Methodology

Fieldwork is essential to the discovery of what matters in a PDS. Because there is relatively little in the PDS literature to describe the multiple perspectives in a PDS in a way that addresses the many aspects of the partnership and their individual meanings, this research aimed to uncover and identify those tacit, often hidden aspects of the PDS model. No instrument has as yet been produced to assist in the delineation of these important variables. The exploration of these aspects was central to the purpose of this study and necessitated that qualitative research methodology be employed.

The research question sought to gain understanding from multiple perspectives. It required the undertaking of in-depth exploration through conversations with stakeholders about how a PDS relationship in one school has affected the school community and the students it was designed to serve. Qualitative methods permit investigations to occur in natural settings with multiple opportunities to observe and gather data from a variety of stakeholders who may hold different perspectives on past, current, and proposed initiatives (Patton, 1990). The primary methodology employed involved a series of in-depth, semi-structured one-hour interviews with PDS stakeholders at one site. Observation notes and collection and analysis of documents complemented the data gathering process.

Upon completion and transcription of each interview, the contents, participant observation records and field notes were analyzed for theme development and categorization as suggested in the methodology literature (Kvale, 1996; Marshall & Rossman, 1995; and Patton, 1990). During this process, the large and complex interview material was organized into thematic groups. The goal of the data analysis was to use analyst-constructed typologies to uncover patterns, themes, and categories to judge what was significant and meaningful in the data (Patton, 1980).

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Results: Multiple Perspectives on an Emerging PDS

Stakeholder Views on the Purpose of the Mountainview PDS

Stakeholders commented extensively about the explicit and implicit purposes of a PDS. The triumvirate of purposes described in the PDS literature were indeed echoed by Mountainview PDS participants, but in varying degrees of acceptance and understanding. While many believed the PDS to be an ideal breeding ground for future teachers that provides better training than conventional pre-service models, fewer school-based stakeholders discussed the connection of this purpose with the partnership's in-service activities. Fewer still, acknowledged the role of the PDS of initiating research for the improvement of the profession by providing knowledge gleaned from collaborative and other types of inquiry. While this view was held by most university-based stakeholders, only a few school-based stakeholders — those with a long storied history and involvement — concurred. The level of understanding of the purposes appears to depend on the level of involvement in PDS activities, the history with the program, and whether one is from the university or the school.

How stakeholders perceived the purpose of the Mountainview PDS appeared to depend on a number of factors, including the length of intimate involvement with the PDS activities and the stakeholder's home organization. School-based stakeholders primarily viewed the purpose of the PDS as teacher preparation, except for a few department chairs active in the operations of the partnership's steering committee. This group, clearly vested in the partnership's activities and level of success, recognized the value of fusing in-service and pre-service education and its potential for continuous and ongoing professional development. University-based stakeholders — perhaps due to an overall greater knowledge of the literature or a heightened awareness of the financial implications of sponsoring in-service programming — also viewed the in-service training as an important, indeed critical, function of the PDS.

Stakeholder Views on the Processes of the Mountainview PDS

In the estimation of many respondents, the processes associated with an effective PDS must include clearly articulating mutually agreeable goals and fashioning practices honoring these objectives. These must be communicated effectively to, and understood by all PDS participants. Finally, the PDS process must embrace the concept of shared decision-making based on a set of jointly established values. It is interesting to note that school-based practitioners were generally more concerned with establishing, clarifying, and communicating the processes that facilitate the functioning of the PDS. University-based stakeholders, on the other hand, appeared to be more concerned with advancing the vision of the partnership and with realizing the full potential of the powerful relationship.

As was the case with PDS purposes, stakeholder views on PDS processes appear to be influenced by the type and length of involvement with the Mountainview partnership. Stakeholders less familiar with the operation of the partnership primarily discussed the importance and need for establishing common practices. For them, this would alleviate growing concern and frustration with what they perceive to be the partnership's lofty goals.

Conversely, stakeholders with higher levels of involvement and lengthier histories with the association expressed their opinions about processes differently. For them, establishing a process where school and university faculty can meet to discuss the emerging vision of the PDS and its goals was a foremost concern. The processes of establishing shared dialogue and culture were primordial. Rather than dwelling on the minutiae of operating the PDS, this group articulated a collaborative design that would respond to most of the concerns of PDS participants.

Stakeholder Views on the Relationships in the Mountainview PDS

While university-based stakeholders recognized the importance of building trust with school-based professionals, the latter group commented with the greatest frequency about the need for nurturing equitable and open relationships. School-based stakeholders were also far

more cautious about the potential for personality-driven partnerships and suggested that indeed the Mountainview PDS was fragile because the tenure of the original site coordinator – very popular with many of the school's teachers – was about to end. They emphasized that relationships based on trust were at the very core of their partnership. University-based stakeholders described successful relationships where participants were each other's critical friends.

The lessons learned from this discussion of relationships in a PDS will permit others interested in creating and sustaining effective school-university partnerships. Because of the existence of mistrust and cynicism of the university on the part of school faculty, the university representative who serves as the site coordinator or liaison must address these challenging conditions. School-based stakeholders have suggested that in order to accomplish this, the relationship must first begin by establishing trust and proceeding slowly, as the activities of the budding partnership will no doubt be placed under the school's very powerful microscope.

Stakeholder Views on the Outcomes of the Mountainview PDS

Many of the outcomes associated with the Mountainview PDS are grounded in personal experience. While there has not been a systemic and global evaluation of the effect of the partnership on students, teachers, interns, and organizations, stakeholders were nevertheless articulate about the abundance of outcomes they associated with the partnership. For school-based stakeholders, these outcomes primarily concerned the positive effects on their students, the effect of the comprehensive training approach for teaching interns and on their own professional life as a result of their involvement with the program. University-based stakeholders, however seemed more articulate about the effect of the partnership on the organizations as a whole. They discussed the partnership's impact on the school more than on the university and eloquently described the PDS's pre-service success.

Summary

Although the data could be neatly categorized into the four themes of purpose, processes, relationships, and outcomes, there emerged a juxtaposition between two groups of stakeholders. While university-based respondents viewed the Mountainview PDS primarily as a venue where multiple activities are occurring in the name of school improvement, school-based stakeholders held a much more pragmatic position. This position was characterized primarily with a concern for establishing modest goals and for creating a set of simple, easily understood, and commonly followed policies and procedures aimed at reducing confusion and improving efficiency.

Conversely, university-based stakeholders appeared to stress broadening their vision, often at the expense of the details many school-based stakeholders so desired. However the distinction between the various responses of school and university respondents was not clear cut. Several school-based stakeholders were very knowledgeable about the ongoing PDS activities, their purpose and fit with the intended design, and were very articulate about what they perceived to be important as the Mountainview PDS continued to develop. Typically these stakeholders were in positions prominent in the governance structure of the partnership, either department chairs or administrators with extensive and long term involvement with more than one PDS activity.

University-based stakeholders were not universally comfortable with bridging the gap between the school and university cultures through their assigned responsibilities. Though several indicated a change in the manner in which they approached their work, some representatives of this group still held a somewhat conventional image of their role. It is not clear whether this view is anchored in a belief that PDS collaboration is not the panacea many believe it to be, because they profess other models of collaboration, or because they are not confident about their interpersonal skills and working in a school environment, or even because the current structure of the PDS did not yet require much change.

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Implications: Toward the Development of a PDS Assessment Framework

The views of respondents on the purpose, processes, relationships, and outcomes of certainly affect the assessment of an emerging PDS. While these are an important starting point, the many interactions between both parent organizations complicate any proposed assessment strategy. The data unveiled at least three different cultural groups in existence in this emerging PDS. The perspectives of these groups significantly influence the development of an assessment framework capable of addressing stakeholder concerns regarding effectiveness. These three cultures are presented below followed by the proposed assessment framework.

The PDS as an organizational entity is by its very dynamic nature, continuously evolving. This in itself has serious implications for any proposed assessment project. Further compounding the challenge of assessment are the concerns of the two parent constituencies in a PDS — the school and the university. Each of the parent organizations has its own set of concerns and assessment priorities. For schools, these represent improving student learning, and developing better teaching practices. For the university, these involve research, the generation of knowledge and the refinement of conceptual models. Any proposed PDS assessment framework must attempt to reconcile these inherently dissimilar concerns and therefore first embrace these differences and derive multiple criteria and second, recognize the changing nature of the PDS and the very collaborative processes that support its survival and growth.

PDSs are generally resource poor often struggling to survive from year to year. Obtaining the support of the constituents involved is critical to the survival of the partnership. It is in the best interest of PDS participants to provide their respective organizations with evidence the partnership is indeed a worthwhile investment. The question is: what kind of information does the PDS need in order to sustain itself? To address PDS assessment, it is first

important to understand the differences between school and university cultures and the influence of these differences on establishing criteria.

Three Cultures, not Two in a PDS

Three distinct cultures began to emerge during the collection and subsequent analysis of the data. Traditionally, there has always been a group of teaching professionals who held very practical and realistic views regarding the university. In the case of the Mountainview PDS, this group – the "pragmatists" – is represented primarily by school faculty who are concerned mostly with solidifying and anchoring the many programmatic loose ends they associate with its daily operations, as evidenced by the following interview excerpt with a school-based respondent:

> *We've got so many loose ends here. It's scary to me. Come on, just shore this thing up. Go back and check the notes of last summer about what we said we were going to do and how it was going to come out. And pull up a target. One thing. Any one thing that you are absolutely going to complete and make that your marquee. And then you say "see, we've completed the marquee." Then we're now working on number two, not 8 or 9 over here... It might actually be publishing a schedule of how things are actually going to go in any one of these programs. Giving them a sheet and saying "we've completed this, we did this. This was our intention and we actually got it done."*

The existence of school-based pragmatists in a PDS has been documented in the literature for quite some time (Ducharme, Sargent and Chaucer, 1991; Ladd, 1969). Members of this group exhibit primarily school-based concerns regarding organization and details of operating the partnership. At Mountainview, even though the PDS has encouraged school and university faculty to co-exist and collaboratively achieve their stated goals, this group still is reluctant to share responsibilities, doubting the capability of the partnership to effectively address their most significant concerns.

A second group – the university-based "conceptualizers"– appear to view the Mountainview PDS as a vast potential well for many promising school improvement initiatives. They appear to have embraced the notion of field-based collaboration, recognizing the importance of developing working relationships with schools but they approach the

partnership slightly differently than their school colleagues, as exemplified in the following, where a university stakeholder suggests criteria for PDS evaluation:

> *I would primarily judge it by what I consider to be the products that came out of it from our Teacher Education program. The evidence that I would look at would be both the performance of those students we have teaching in classrooms and the documentation that they were able to provide in their portfolios. I'm interested in the outcomes as much as the process. I think the processes are pretty messy and we're going to continue to be messy. In fact I suspect that any PDS that's operationally worth its salt is going to be a messy place to work because that messiness tells you that people are pushing the envelope...*

The concerns of this group appear to be more rooted in gaining insight and increased understanding about the learning process and conceptualizing models of collaboration rather than in the act of teaching itself or in generating practical mechanisms for working together.

The "partners" constitutes the third group and appears to be made up of both school and university stakeholders who truly believe in the notion of an organization, absent any apparent hierarchy, capable of transforming schools, universities, and the educators which fill their halls. Where there once existed a gulf separating school and university faculty in matters of field-based education, the PDS has allowed several stockholders to colonize an island oasis between the two large land masses. Here, rules are bent and chaos looms, as pioneers clear a path toward unlimited partnership potential. A school-based and university-based stakeholder respectively discuss the effects of working in a PDS:

> *The university winds up with student teachers trained like they've never been trained before. We wind up with extra help in the building for at-risk kids. We get financial resources through SDI and through the student teachers. And at the same time, we wind up doing staff development with the classroom teachers by having the student teachers bring in new teaching methods... Having a PDS is a way of making sure that we don't sit back and say "now we no longer have to change [because] we have arrived... we are perfect."*

> *Once one is in a PDS for a while, it does change your frame of reference, it does change your cognitive set. And mine was changed and I could no longer tolerate the very third rate job we were doing in conventional practice. Things were discoordinate and fragmented and the kids perceived no pattern in connection with the course to the field experience. We were running graduate courses for individual teachers who wanted a degree, but whose degree came to nothing in terms of school improvement. Only in a school context would that stuff make a difference.*

PDS partners appear equally at home regardless of whether the setting is the university campus or the school building. They appear to conceptualize PDS challenges in similar ways,

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using similar language and a familiar knowledge base. This new culture appears to include stakeholders who have successfully learned to span cultural boundaries and witness the fruits of their collaboration. Their working relationship epitomizes the potential of the PDS partnership.

Evaluation Framework

The following assessment framework accounts for the dynamic and changing nature of the PDS, as well as addresses the concerns rooted in the three cultures present in an emerging PDS (figure 2). A camera with five interchangeable lenses serves as an effective metaphor to illustrate this model. Although each lens is grounded primarily in one culture, the image it captures is compelling to all groups. Together these lenses form a complete picture of the partnership's effectiveness by focusing on: student learning, pre-service teacher education, in-service professional development, the generation of knowledge for the profession and its role in informing and initiating mutual renewal, and the mutuality of the collaborative relationship (figure 3).

Improved Student Learning in a PDS

By far the most pressing and important issue in a PDS is the need for comprehensive study of the impact on student learning. This is becoming increasingly critical as long-standing PDSs are being called upon to justify their existence and the resources they require. The impact of the PDS on Mountainview students was a frequently cited concern of both school and university based respondents. In the words of participants, PDSs should not be supported unless the improved learning of students is achieved and documented. This is especially true of the Mountainview PDS as it holds central to its model, the improved learning of all students. Therefore at the heart of every PDS assessment initiative should be an attempt to describe both qualitatively and quantitatively, the impact of PDS inspired initiatives. This challenge must continuously be addressed.

Improved Pre-Service Education in a PDS

A logical strategy to employ in the assessment of a PDS uses the three purposes of the partnership as evaluative lenses. Extending this analysis would find us examining the performance of the PDS in preparing new teachers. Interpreting the words of respondents would then suggest that criteria vis-à-vis the preparation of teachers consider the following questions:

1) What is the depth of the teaching internship experience? How has this experience varied in scope and in what ways have interns been provided with opportunities to fully understand the culture of school?
2) In what ways have teaching interns had an opportunity to work with a range of expert teachers and understand and examine the effects of their teaching styles and approaches?
3) What has been the level of reflection during the preparation of the new teachers and how well have teaching interns expressed their development as professionals?
4) Following graduation from a PDS, are new teachers still in the profession and if so, to what extent have they become change agents and future leaders? In addition, in what ways have they engaged in continuous professional development and inquiry?

Since the preparation of the next generation of teachers is a purpose of a PDS, it stands to reason that a proper assessment of the partnership includes a close look at both the components of the preparation and the influence and impact of graduating teachers in their classrooms, schools, and communities.

Better In-Service Programming in a PDS

The second stated purpose of the PDS as an evaluative lens suggests the examination of professional development initiatives for teachers. Considering stakeholder responses, criteria and questions raised can be listed in the following manner:

1) In what ways are the professional development initiatives sponsored by the PDS meaningful? How do they respond to teacher and school generated needs? How are they designed to promote increased learning in the classroom?
2) In what ways do sponsored professional development activities focus on process as well as product? That is, how do these activities allow teachers to tailor professional development to meet their needs and the unique nature of their classrooms and school?
3) In what ways do these professional development activities promote reflection and professional growth?
4) Are these activities based in part on PDS participant led inquiry and do they promote ongoing assessment about their impact?

These questions, though broad in scope, honor the voiced concern of Mountainview PDS stakeholders about the need for meaningful professional development in their school.

The PDS as Generator of Knowledge for the Profession

The final purpose of a PDS is to generate knowledge for the profession. Using this purpose as an evaluative lens suggests a close inspection of the kind of research and inquiry in which PDS participants are engaged and how the results of these activities are used to inform and promote mutual renewal. Assessment questions addressing the performance of a PDS might include:

1) In what ways are research and inquiry initiatives attempting to assess the impact on student learning of PDS initiatives? How are they successful?
2) How many PDS participants are engaged in action research? In what ways are they promoting the purposes of the PDS?
3) How many PDS participants are engaged in collaborative inquiry?
4) How is the knowledge generated by PDS inquirers used to inform and catalyze mutual renewal?

Without a more concerted effort to promote and support the generation of knowledge in a PDS, such partnerships stand in jeopardy of reaching a developmental plateau and worse, risk termination of their collaborative endeavors.

The Importance of Mutuality in a PDS

Although the participants in this study suggested assessment criteria inspired by the stated purposes of a PDS, they also proposed criteria more related to the process of nurturing and nourishing a collaborative relationship that captures the unique organizational practices and behaviors of the relationship. The first is inspired by feminist theory (McWilliam, 1994; Noddings, 1984; Olesen, 1994; Purvis, 1985; Smith-Livdahl et al, 1995) and the final is derived from complexity theory (Clarke et al, 1995; Waldrop, 1992; Wheatley, 1992):

1. How are the collaborative processes of the PDS nurturing a culture that develops a collective and evolving vision and values the voice of all participants?
2. In what ways has the PDS been flexible in response to its rapidly changing environment and how has it applied its renewing organizational learning?

These guiding questions seek to examine the PDS's ability to effectively operate as collaborative endeavor with complicated and challenging goals.

Implications of the Findings

The constituencies involved in PDS relationships influence whatever assessment process is suggested to examine them. Ultimately, the PDS is formed by the school and the university and as was described earlier, they have inherent differences that shape the way they view the world. For schools, the primary concern is the education of the students in their communities. Any initiative that satisfactorily assists them in the pursuit of this goal will likely be supported. Conversely, any initiative that is perceived to prevent and detract from the achievement of this goal will likely be terminated. Does the PDS provide adequate support

for improving the education of school students and does it provide enough practicality to merit continuing a relationship with the university?

It would appear that in the Mountainview PDS, a third culture has emerged as a result of the close association and collaboration of certain school and university faculty. This emerging culture differs from the more distinct and conventional school and university cultures in that it has fostered an understanding of norms, behaviors and practices among the bicultural members of this group. These members understand the complex developmental requirements of an emerging PDS and are able to translate conceptual goals into reality amid a mosaic of other cultures.

For universities whose primary mission is to generate knowledge, initiatives and programs that advance this agenda will be supported and initiatives which do not will likely be discontinued. Does a PDS relationship provide enough opportunity for legitimate and methodologically sound research and does it contribute to the knowledge base of the profession to warrant continuing the partnership? It is clear that there are significant differences between the partners in a PDS. Are these differences irreconcilable or will schools and universities be able to co-exist in a manner that allows them to support the improved learning for all students (pre-Kindergarten through graduate school)?

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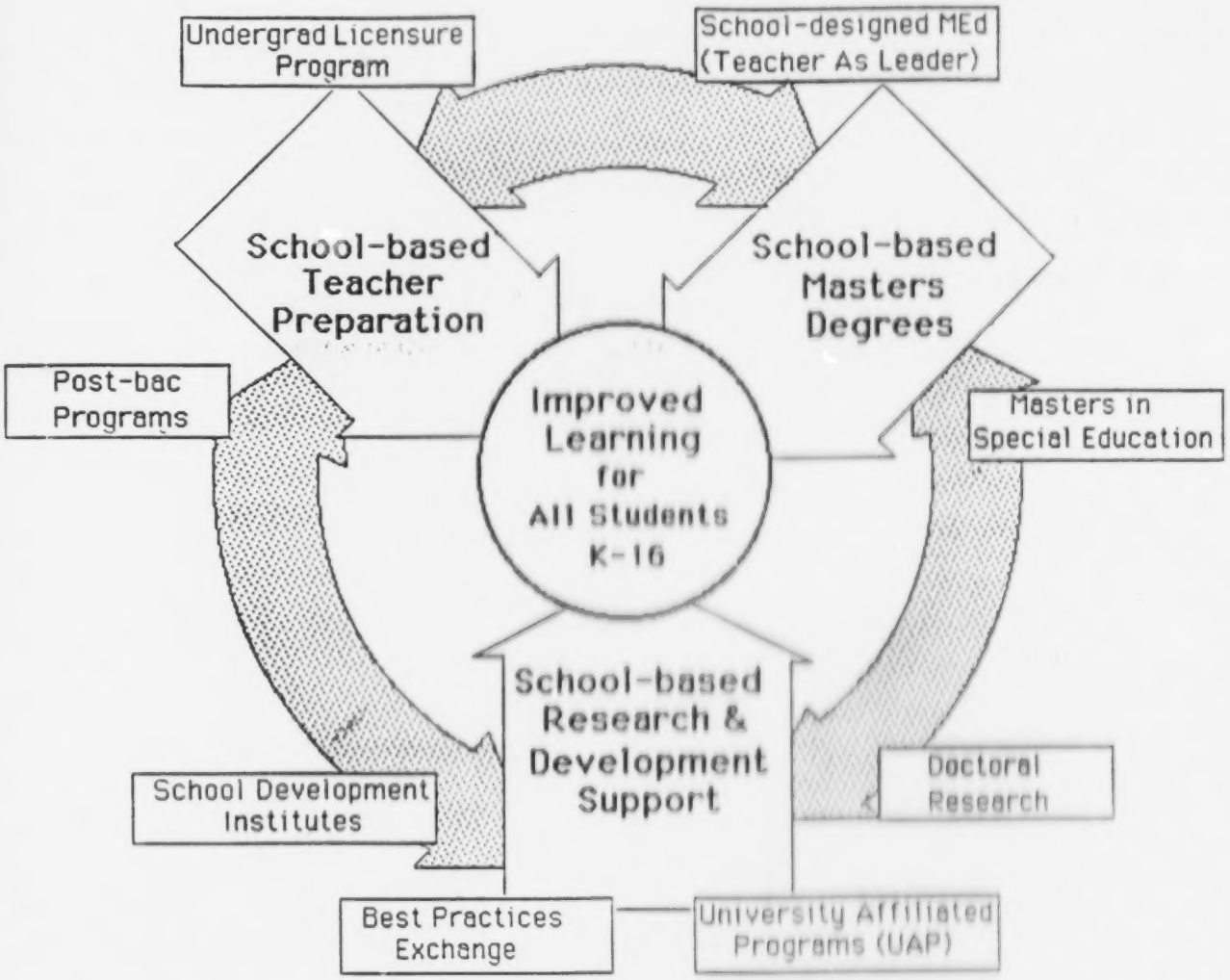

Figure 1. The University of Vermont Professional Development School Model.

Developing a PDS assessment framework (Kostin, Georgia Southern University)

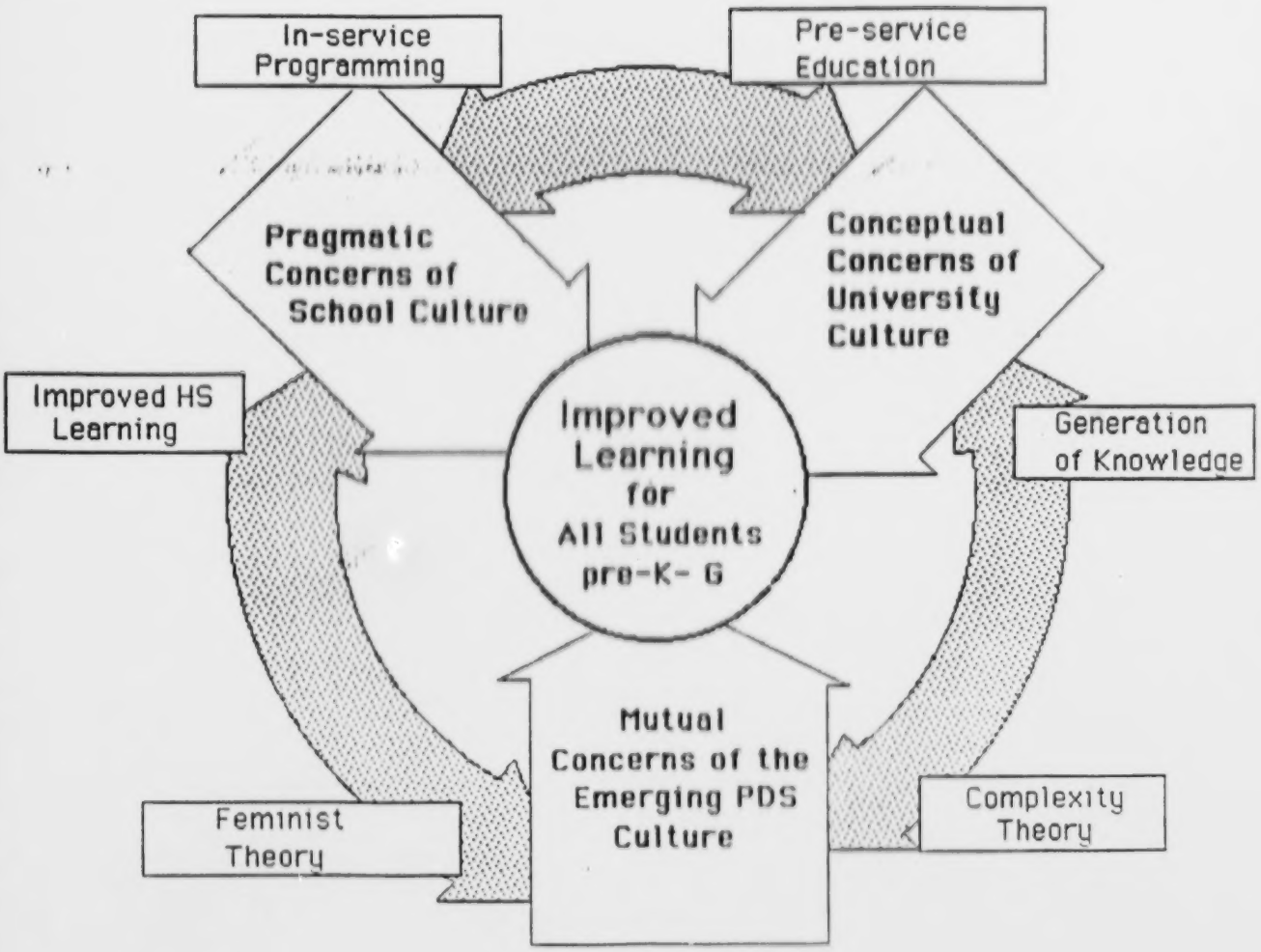

Figure 2. The relationship between cultures in a Professional Development School.

Developing a PDS assessment framework (Kostin, Georgia Southern University)

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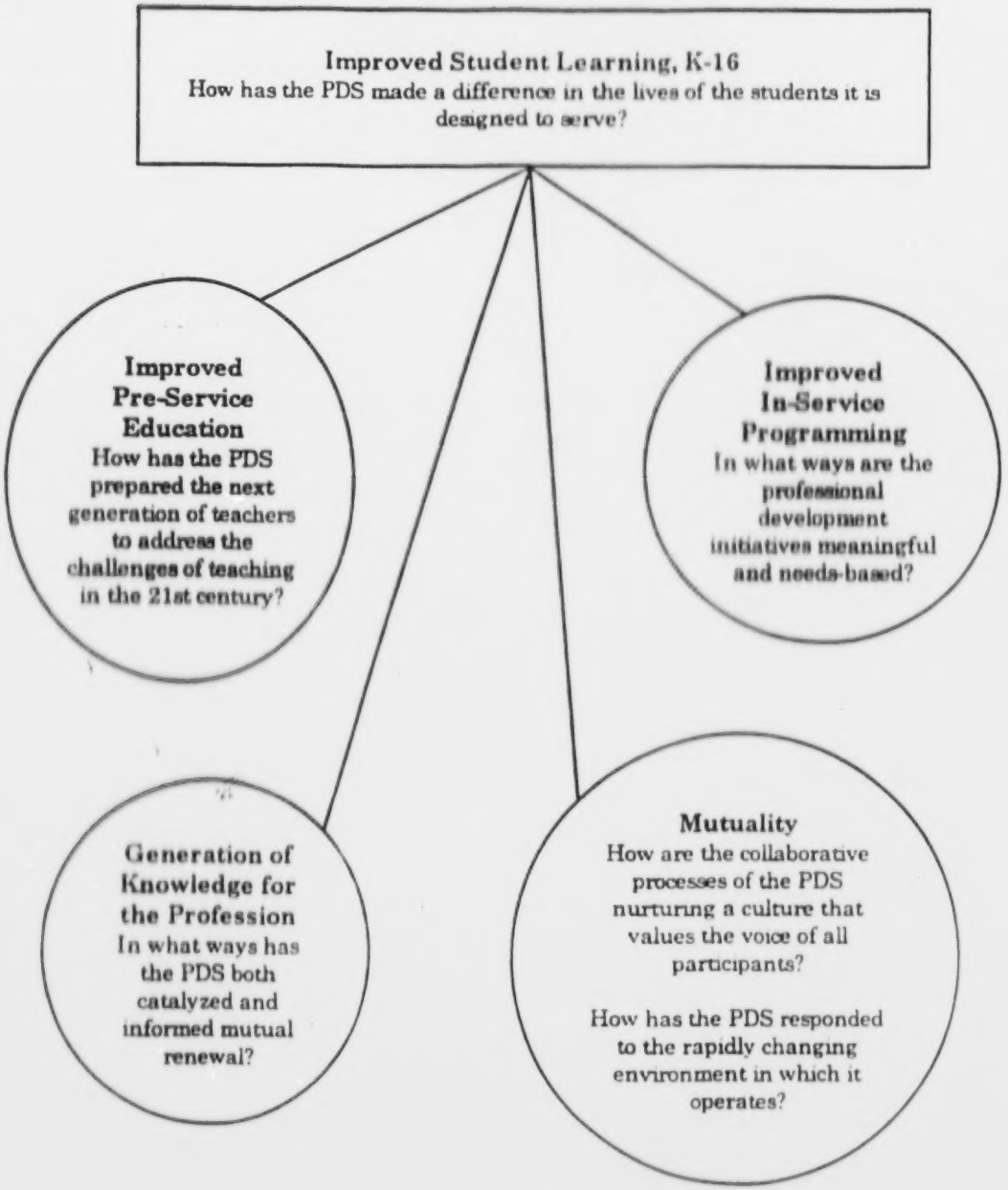
Improved Student Learning, K-16
How has the PDS made a difference in the lives of the students it is designed to serve?
Improved Pre-Service Education
How has the PDS prepared the next generation of teachers to address the challenges of teaching in the 21st century?
Improved In-Service Programming
In what ways are the professional development initiatives meaningful and needs-based?
Generation of Knowledge for the Profession
In what ways has the PDS both catalyzed and informed mutual renewal?
Mutuality
How are the collaborative processes of the PDS nurturing a culture that values the voice of all participants?
How has the PDS responded to the rapidly changing environment in which it operates?

Figure 3. Proposed lenses for the assessment of an emerging Professional Development School.

Developing a PDS assessment framework (Kostin, Georgia Southern University)